Vol. VIII. Numb. 14

THE

OBSERVATOR.

Farther Diſcourſe betwixt Roger *and the* Obſervator *about the Peace. The News of the* French *Preparations at* Dunkirk *for another Invaſion. The Poſture of* Scotland, *and reducing the* French *King from an abſolute, to a limited Power.*

From Wednesday, March 16. to Saturday, March 19. 1709.

Obſ. WHAT's the News about the Peace now, *Roger?*

Country-m. There's nothing certain about it, that I can find, Maſter; People talk of it according to their ſeveral Humours; and the foreign News mention it with great Uncertainty. We don't know what's become of the *French* Plenipotentiaries, ſo much talk'd of. Some ſay, they are return'd Home, others ſay, they lurk ſomewhere in the *Netherlands*, 'till the Mind of *Great Britain* and the Empire be known; and I hear ſome People ſay, Maſter, that they believe the noble and ſeaſonable Addreſs of our Lords and Commons has defeated the Hopes that the *French* had conceiv'd of procuring a Peace, 'till our Government be firſt ſatisfy'd as to the Preliminaries adviſ'd to by our Parliament.

Obſ. This ſhews the Happineſs of our Conſtitution, *Roger*; and that 'tis a great and valuable Priviledge convey'd down to us by our noble Anceſtors, that our Lives and Fortunes can't be diſpos'd of without our own Conſent. We are not to be ſent at the Will of any Prince to Wars, as Sheep are ſent to the Slaughter. Nor does our Conſtitution allow our Sovereigns a Power to make a Peace diſhonourable or unſafe to the Nation. They are entruſted with the Guardianſhip of the Peoples Liberties, in order to preſerve, and not to deſtroy or impair them; and 'tis our Happineſs, that her Majeſty acts accordingly in perfect Harmony with her Great Council, the Parliament.

Country-m. I can't underſtand the Proceedings of the *French* King, Maſter; for at the ſame Time he ſeems to be ſo forward for a Peace, and upon ſome Ground or other, but God knows what, to have ſent Men to treat about it, we find by the publick News, that he is ſo far from any Inclination to give up the *Spaniſh* Monarchy to the Houſe of *Auſtria*, that the Cortes, or States of *Spain*, are ſummon'd to meet in *April*, to recognize the Right of his Great Grandſon, the Prince of *Aſturia*, as the preſumptive Heir of that Monarchy. In like Manner he ſeems to be ſo far from any Inclination to comply with our Demands about the Pretender, that if we may Credit the publick News, he is to ſerve this Campaign in the *Netherlands*, under the Dauphin, and perhaps he deſigns he ſhall take t'other Trip to *Scotland*, if it be true, that he has laid an Embargo upon the Ships at *Dunkirk*, and order'd a Squadron of Men of War thither from his ſeveral Ports in the Ocean; and conſidering with what Zeal the Dauphin declar'd himſelf for the Pretender, in Council, upon the late King *James*'s Death, as the News from *France* then gave us an Account, we have no Reaſon to doubt, but he will forward another Expedition againſt *Great Britain*, as much as he can, and perhaps may encamp and entrench himſelf ſo advantagiouſly, as to be able to ſpare Men enough for the Pretender.

Obſ. If he do, *Roger*, I hope 'twill prove abortive, as the former Attempt did; for we are not to doubt but we have clean Ships enough to purſue him, if he get out of *Dunkirk* once more; that our Commanders ſhall have Orders to purſue him as cloſe as Capt. *Gordon* did the *Salisbury*; be honour'd and rewarded for their Pains, and advanc'd according to Merit and the laudable Cuſtoms of War; that our vigilant Confederate Generals will take Care, if they find by Intelligence that there's any conſiderable Body of Men ready to embark at *Dunkirk*, to have a ſufficient Number as ready to embark at *Oſtend*, if there be not enough in this Iſland, to make Head againſt them. There's no Queſtion but Care will be taken, that ſuch Horſe-men as embark, ſhall not be landed at too great a Diſtance from their Horſes, if Storms and Tempeſts don't ſeparate them; that the Garriſons of *Scotland* ſhall be ſufficiently provided with Ammunition and Arms before-hand; that their Muskets ſhall have Rammers, and every Thing elſe, to make them ſerviceable; that their Pikes and other Arms, ſhall be freſh, and not rotten or ruſty; that their Guns ſhall be mounted on ſerviceable Carriages: that the Caſtles of *Dumbarton*, *Sterling*, and *Edinburgh*, ſhall be in ſufficient Repair; that they ſhall have conſiderably more than 1500 regular Troops in the Country, and ſuch a Body as ſhall not find themſelves under a Neceſſity of retiring to *England*, in Caſe the Pretender land on this Side the *Frith* of *Edinburgh*; that they ſhall have timely and poſitive Orders, to whom and whither to ſend for more Troops, if they need 'em, and that Care will be taken they ſhall not want Money, Cloaths, or Proviſions. We are not to doubt, but Matters are ſo order'd, as to have Revolution Men, and not *Jacobites* or ſuch as took Arms for the late King *James*, in the Commiſſions of Peace and Lieutenancy, and in the Offices of Sheriffs, that if any Perſons be taken up for being in Arms contrary to Law, all Things ſhall be ſo provided for trying them, as to give no Occaſion for the Proſecutor in the Queen's Name, and the Judges, to reflect upon one another, in Print, for failing of their Duty.

Country-m. It rejoyces *Roger*'s Heart, Maſter, to hear you ſay, that all Things are ſo well prepar'd there, to give the Pretender a warm Reception, in Caſe of a ſecond Attempt: and particularly, that the Caſtles of *Edinburgh*, *Sterling*, and *Dumbarton*, are ſo well provided and repair'd. I por'd upon the Map of *Scotland* t'other Day, Maſter, 'till I was almoſt blind, to find the Situation of thoſe Caſtles, particularly of *Dumbarton* and *Sterling*, at laſt I found them, and perceiv'd, by the Help of my Boy *Tom*, that their Situation is of ſuch Importance, that they ought to be very well furniſh'd with Men, Arms, and Ammunition; for both of them lie ſo conveniently for a Communication with the Highlands, and the latter for a Correſpondence betwixt the *North* and *South* of that Country, that ſhould the *French* or the *Jacobites* ſeize 'em, they are ſo ſtrong by Nature, that with a little Art they might be made impregnable, and we ſhould have a plaguy deal A-do to get them out again. Beſides, I find, Maſter, that they may come by Sea to *Dumbarton*, either thro' *St. George*'s Channel, or round *Ireland*: Therefore I am glad to hear there's ſuch Care taken of thoſe Things. I am ſure, Maſter, rather than they ſhould want Rammers for their Guns and Muskets, or good Pikes, I would cut down my Grove, and carry it to them in my Carts. But pray, Maſter, how is the *North* of that Country, and the Highlands provided? For there, I perceive by all our Accounts, the Papiſts and *Jacobites* are moſt

most numerous; and I find some People are willing they should increase, since Ministers sent by the establish'd Church to instruct the People in those Parts, have been rabbl'd, and the Rabblers rather encourag'd, than punish'd, by some of the Magistrates?

Obs. There's a good Garrison, and a very able and honest Commander, Major General *Maitland*, at *Innerlochy*, *Roger*; and we are not to question, but Care will be taken to secure *Inverness*, *Aberdeen*, *St. Johnstown*, and *Dundee*, by good Garrisons, and that a sufficient Body of Troops will be posted in the *North*, to hinder the High-Church-men, Papists, and *Jacobites* from rendevouzing at Masses, and nonjurant Meetings, in order to join the Pretender; that the well-affected Gentry and Clans shall have Orders to put themselves in a Posture of Defence to join the regular Troops, in Case the Popish Clans and *Jacobites* should take Arms to join the Pretender. Nor is there any Danger, whatever some People may suggest, in trusting the Militia and Inhabitants on this Side the *Forth*, and the Duke of *Argile*'s Country, with Arms; so that the Revolution Party in *Scotland* are strong enough to quell the other, if they be entrusted, encourag'd, and made easy, as I hope they will now be, by redressing their Complaints about Drawbacks, and other Things, and putting such Men in all the Parts of the Administration, as are belov'd and trusted by the Country.

Country-m. I am glad to hear that, Master. Pray let's talk a little more of the Peace; for I and all my Sons would rather go for Recruits, than the *French* King should not be drubb'd into better Manners, and be made uncapable of sending the Pretender to give us new Disturbances: And I am sure, Master, most of my honest Neighbours would do the like; for it can never come into my Head, that he will surrender the *Spanish* Monarchy, so long as he has the best Part of it in peaceable Possession; yet I hear some People boast mightily, that we shall either have Peace or *Paris* next Campagn; that's the Word now, Master.

Obs. With all my Heart, *Roger*; but History tells us, we have had *Paris* before, and could not keep it; so that for my own Part, I would rather have *Madrid*; and am of Opinion, we might have kept it when we had it, if King *Charles* had been faithfully advis'd, and duly supported. Nor can I ever think, let us make what Peace we will, that we and our Allies can be secure, so long as the *French* King is vested with such an absolute Power over so vast a Dominion, and is so strong at Sea; therefore, *Roger*, let People treat my Proposal of obliging him to restore the Edict of *Nantz*, and the Estates of his Country to their ancient Parliamentary Power, as an impracticable Chimera, as much as they please, I see no Cause to retract it; for since the future Safety of *Europe* depends upon it, in my Opinion, it ought to be consider'd. We see, that many Princes and States of the Empire, notwithstanding all the pressing Instances of the Emperor and his Allies, and of his Power by the Constitution of that Country, to oblige them to do their Duty in Time of War, are very slack in providing for their own Defence. We see that brave Prince, the Elector of *Hannover*, in whose Reputation and Safety we are so much concern'd, always disabl'd from making Use of his Valour and Conduct for the common Cause, as if there were a Conspiracy against him, both to sink his Purse and his Reputation; so that the Empire can never be safe, while the *French* King continues in such absolute Power, and in a Capacity to invade that great, unwieldy, and I think we may too justly say, unwilling Government, when once the Confederacy is dissolv'd by a Peace. And for our own Part, I think our Safety requires, that his Protestant Subjects should be restor'd to their Liberty, and their cautionary Towns; and were this once done, and the Estates of *France* reinvested with their former Power, we need not doubt but they are so sensible of the Calamities their Country has suffer'd, and how much it has been drain'd of Men and Money, to pursue his foolish Design of an universal Monarchy, that they would take Care how they suffer'd him or his Successors unjustly to disturb their Neighbours any more, and to sacrifice the Lives and Fortunes of their own Subjects to their hateful Ambition. This would also secure *Spain*, which being so large a Government, and so much exhausted both of Men and Money, can't otherwise be in a Condition to resist him: and we may be fully satisfy'd, by his getting the Prince of *Asturias* recognis'd, he has no Mind to quit his Pretensions to that Monarchy, tho' he may quit the Possession of it for some Time, in order to make himself more capable of repossessing it for ever. Then, as to his Naval Power, 'twas no small Part of the Renown'd Queen *Elizabeth*'s Glory, that when one of his Predecessors attempted to grow Great that Way, she sent him such sharp Messages as made him lay that Design aside. And since *Lewis* the XIV. is now so Mighty at Sea, and that our Fleet has not hitherto been so manag'd, as to lessen his to any considerable Degree since the Battel of *La Hogue*, under Admiral *Russel*, 'twould seem to be but reasonable that such a Curb should be given to his unlimited Power, as to put him out of a Condition to waft over Pretenders upon us at Pleasure. But more of this Subject another Time, *Roger*.

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